THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) With a view to decongest the prisons and improve the condition of prisons, prisoners and prison personnel, the Government of India initiated a five years scheme in 2002-03 with a total outlay of Rs. 1800 crore on cost sharing basis in the ratio of 75:25 between the Central and State Governments respectively. The scheme has since been extended upto 31.3.2009.

Considering the demand of various States for granting further financial assistance for construction of new Jails/additional barracks so as to address the problem of overcrowding, the Ministry of Home Affairs has initiated the process of formulating second phase of the scheme of modernization of prisons. Necessary steps are being taken in this regard in consultation with the Ministry of Finance.

(b) and (c) The scheme is being monitored regularly by way of obtaining quarterly progress report from all the State Governments. Regular review meetings are also held by this Ministry with the State Government officials. The senior officers of the level of Joint Secretaries of the Ministry have been assigned to make on the spot inspection and review the scheme with the State Governments. All the States where the progress of implementation was slow, have assured that they will complete all the activities undertaken under the scheme in a timely manner.

(d) and (e) Most of the States have implemented the scheme timely. The States such as Chhattisgarh, Jammu and Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh and Punjab are somewhat lagging behind in implementing the scheme. The full central funds these States have not yet been released because of non furnishing of utilization certificates of funds in respect of previous releases. At various review meetings with Home Secretaries/DG (Prisons), these State Governments have been impressed upon to speed up the utilization so that balanced amount of central funds could be released to them and prison reforms are Implemented in earnest. Against the Central share of Rs. 1350 crore (75% of the total outlay of Rs. 1800 crores), an amount of Rs. 1315.11 crores have already been released to various states. The various states have already utilized 78% of the total fund (including the corresponding state share).

Plan of leftist underground group to take over Indian territory by force

1805. SHRI SHARAD ANANTRAO JOSHI: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that according to an intelligence agency report underground leftist group have prepared a plan to take over 35 per cent of the Indian territory through terrorist/ naxalite forces;

(b) whether it is also a fact that as per report, leftists' underground groups are active in 15 States and have established contacts with the ULFA activists in North-East and LTTE contingents in Sri Lanka;

(c) whether the said report mentions that over 20,000 Maoist activists are working underground in India; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the action taken or proposed to be taken by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SHRIPRAKASH JAISWAL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) During 2008, majority of naxal incidents were reported from some areas of 9 States of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. Stray naxal incidents have also been reported from Kerala, Karnataka, Haryana and Tamil Nadu. Over 80 percent of naxal incidents and casualties were reported from States of Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Orissa alone.

There are no inputs to suggest any current tactical linkages of naxals with ULFA and LTTE.

(c) and (d) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

Government deals with naxal problem in a holistic manner. States take appropriate action and Central Government supplements their efforts towards capacity building and resources through a wide range of ongoing schemes on security and development.

Changes made in Warrant of Precedence in 2007

1806. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any changes were made during 2007 in the "Warrant of Precedence";

(b) if so, the reasons for omission of India's two living Five Star Generals—Field Marshal SHFJ Manekshaw who died in June, 2008 and Marshal of the Air Force, Arjun Singh; and

(c) whether Government is proposing to revise the List of Precedence as persons of proven extraordinary Military status are conferred these ranks and they never retire during their life-time?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Field Marshal SHFJ Manekshaw and Air Marshal Arjun Singh have been assigned position in Article 12 of the Table of Precedence, commonly referred to as Warrant of Precedence, as a measure personal to them, without making any formal amendment to the Table.

Supreme Court's stay on fines for traffic violation

1807. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Supreme Court has imposed an interim stay on the increase in the fines for violation of traffic rules, earlier ordered by Delhi High Court;